

## **The Influence of the Educational System of the Sokoto Caliphate on The Development of Self-Reliance Among Muslims in Sokoto State**

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigates the relevance of the educational approach of the Sokoto Caliphate to the promotion of self-reliance among Muslim youths in Sokoto State, Nigeria. The study is premised on the increasing prevalence of idleness, begging, unemployment, and other socially undesirable activities, including criminal behaviour and drug abuse, among youths in the state. Although Islamic teachings discourage begging except under circumstances of genuine necessity, a considerable number of young people engage in begging as a consequence of inadequate educational opportunities, unemployment, and limited means of livelihood. The study adopted a mixed-method research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis. Questionnaires were administered to 500 respondents selected from relevant Local Government Areas in Sokoto State. The findings indicate that the educational principles and practices of the Sokoto Caliphate historically encouraged productive engagement, economic independence, vocational skills, and self-reliance among members of the Muslim community. These principles are considered relevant to addressing contemporary challenges of youth unemployment and economic dependency. The study therefore recommends the incorporation of relevant aspects of the Sokoto Caliphate's educational philosophy into contemporary educational curricula, the establishment and strengthening of vocational and skills-acquisition centers, and the implementation of public awareness programmes aimed at discouraging dependency and promoting productive livelihoods. It further advocates strengthened collaboration between government institutions, educational authorities, and Islamic scholars to adapt the educational legacy of the Sokoto Caliphate towards sustainable youth empowerment, self-reliance, and socio-economic development. The study also presents a summary of the major findings and draws conclusions based on the evidence obtained*

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### **Introduction**

Sokoto Caliphate had been centers of bustling economic activities for self-reliance for centuries, prior to the emergence of the caliphate there were various types of economic activities. The main

preoccupation of the people was farming, which was extensively done during the rainy season. A part from seasonal farming, a reasonable form of irrigation was also practiced. Both food and cash crops were cultivated side by side, especially guinea-corn, millet and other agricultural products for keeping youths self reliant. A part from farming Sokoto Caliphate noted for active participation commercial activities. J.H Yola (2004). People of the Caliphate were engaged in long distance of trade(fatauci) which usually took them to different parts of Africa in general and Sokoto caliphate in particular, for the purpose of exporting their goods and importing other products from those areas which were outside their traditional areas such as gwanja, timbuktu, borno and the jukun markets, which is observed that this business transaction easily helped the economic growth and self reliance to the people of the caliphate in particular. They also engaged in internal trade (kasuwanci), this was especially the case with merchants with small scale capital for the self reliance of the general masses. This has resulted people of the caliphate to be conversant with trading in different commodities such as [gold](#), ivory, salt, iron, tin, weapons, horses, dyed cotton cloth, kola nuts, glassware and metal. Cities specialised in the manufacture or trade of certain goods, for example, dyes - especially indigo at Katsina and Daura or [Silver](#)Jewellery at Kebbi and Zamfara. The caliphate, which comprises the entire, Hausaland, became famous (and still is today) for its finely worked leather goods such as water bags, saddles, harnesses, and sacks to transport goods for the region's trade caravans. Various [crafts](#)were organised into guilds which ensured standards were maintained and prices were kept fair. Hausa agriculture, boosted by such techniques as crop rotation and the use of fertilizers, produced crops which included millet, sorghum, rice, maize, peanuts, beans, henna, tobacco, and onions. In addition, fishing and hunting were carried out and goats raised (important for ritual sacrifices) and donkeys bred (the principal form of transport). Each city had its own markets where both men and [women](#) sold their wares, and many cities also had international trade markets where merchants sold in bulk. Goods were exchanged in kind although salt, cloth, and slaves were often used as a standardised form of commodity-currency this entire struggle made for essential self-reliance of the people. Thus, major economic activities in Hausa land include agricultural activities, production industries and other commercial activities.

### Statement of the Problems

Islam places considerable emphasis on self-reliance, productive engagement, and the dignity associated with earning a lawful livelihood. Consistent with these Islamic principles, the Sokoto Caliphate promoted religious and moral instruction while simultaneously encouraging productive economic activities, including agriculture, commerce, entrepreneurship, and the acquisition of vocational skills. Such an educational orientation played an important role in strengthening economic independence and improving the capacity of individuals and the wider Caliphate to sustain themselves. however, a significant number of youth's face challenges such as unemployment, idleness, begging, and participation in various socially undesirable activities. These conditions may be associated with changing attitudes towards work, increasing materialistic tendencies, limited access to quality education and employment opportunities, and the belief that some forms of legitimate work are socially inferior. From the Islamic perspective, engaging in any lawful and dignified occupation is preferable to dependence on others through begging or idleness. Furthermore, education should not be regarded solely as a pathway to material acquisition but also as an instrument for cultivating dignity, self-sufficiency, moral integrity, and freedom from economic dependence. Consequently, greater attention should be given to the educational principles of the Sokoto Caliphate, particularly its emphasis on

productive skills and self-reliance. Revitalizing these principles could contribute significantly to addressing contemporary challenges of youth unemployment, poverty, dependency, and socio-economic underdevelopment in Sokoto state. Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- 1.To appraise the educational approach of the Sokoto Caliphate to the promotion of self-reliance among youths.
- 2.To examine the relevance of educational approach of the Sokoto Caliphate in the promotion self-reliance among youth in Sokoto state

### **Research Questions**

- 1.What is the nature of the educational approach of the Sokoto caliphate to the promotion of self-reliance among the youths?
- 2.To what extent the educational approach of the Sokoto Caliphate are relevant to the promotion of Self-Reliance among Muslims in Sokoto state Nigeria?

### **Significant of the study**

The significance of this study cannot be overstated, as it seeks to address a critical socio-economic challenge affecting youths and the wider community. The study is significant in several respects. First, it clearly examines the Islamic perspective on self-reliance, productive engagement, and the avoidance of idleness and dependency. This may contribute to changing the attitudes of Muslim youths who deliberately choose to remain unemployed or depend excessively on others for their livelihood. Second, the study highlights the teachings and educational practices of the Sokoto Caliphate concerning self-reliance and productive living. This demonstrates not only the intellectual and scholarly contributions of the Caliphate but also provides insight into the fundamental objectives and principles that guided its establishment. Furthermore, examining these teachings may strengthen understanding of the religious and educational foundations of the Sokoto Caliphate and provide a clearer perspective on the historical motivations and legitimacy of the Jihad that led to its establishment

### **Literature**

scholars have written extensively on one aspect of self-reliance or the other, but to the best of this research no one among the contemporary researchers has written on this topic. Given this as an impetus, this research therefore, attempts to bridge the gap in the concern of previous researchers. Geographical location of Sokoto. Sokoto is a major city located in the extreme Northwest of Nigeria, near the confluence of the Sokoto River and the Rima River. As of 2006 it has a population of people over 427,760. Sokoto is the modern-day capital of Sokoto State and was previously the capital of the north-western state. The name Sokoto (which is the modern/anglicized version of the local name, sakkwato) is of Arabic origin, representing sooq, 'market' in English. It is also known as Sakkwato, Birnin Shaihu da Bello(Sokoto, the city of Shehu and Bello). The seat of the former Sokoto Caliphate, the city is predominantly Muslim and an important seat of Islamic learning in Nigeria. The Sultan who heads the caliphate is effectively the spiritual leader of Nigerian Muslims. Opeyemi (2021) sokoto state in the present form came into being in October 1996 then Zamfara state was created by the then head of state commander in chief of the arm forces general Sani Abacha .over eighty 80 percent of inhabitants of Sokoto state practice one

form of agriculture or the other they produce crops, such as millets, guinea-corn, Tabaco and vegetable for cash local craft such as blacksmithing weaving, dying, carving and tether works also pay an important role in the economic life of the people of the state. (Tukur (2012)

### **Sokoto state natural resources.**

Sokoto State is equally endowed with natural and mineral resources. Agro-allied industries using the following materials: Cotton, Groundnut, Sorghum, Maize, Rice, Wheat, Sugar cane, Cassava Gum Arabic and Tobacco. As raw materials can be established in the State. Large-scale farming can also be practiced in the State using irrigation water from Goronyo Dam, Lugu, Kalmalo, Wamakko and Kwakwazo lakes among others. Minerals such as Kaolin, Gypsum limestone, literate, Red mills, Phosphate, both yellow and green shade clay, sand etc. are available in the State in commercial quantities. Mineral based industries, using these raw materials could be established in the State. The Tsetse-free-open grassland has made animal husbandry a very lucrative venture in the State. There are all kinds of animals both wild and domestic in the State. Sokoto ranks second in Livestock production in the country with animal population of well over eight (8) million. The availability of these economic potentials provide good investment opportunities, particularly in aggro-allied industries such as flour mills, tomato processing, sugar refining, textiles, glue, tanning, fish canning, dairy etc. That is why the 23 Local Government Headquarters in the State have been connected to the National grid. (internet source)

### ***Recent economy growth and challenges encountered by Sokoto states***

Sokoto State has been seeing growth in its agriculture sector, particularly in the production of crops such as rice, maize, and wheat. The state government has been implementing various agricultural initiatives to boost productivity and reduce food insecurity in the region. However, Sokoto State still faces challenges such as high poverty rates, inadequate infrastructure, and low levels of education. These factors have hindered the state's overall economic development.

According to Merriam Webster:

“Self-reliance simply as ‘reliance on one’s own efforts and abilities’, which doesn’t quite do the concept much justice, either. Economists defined self-sufficiency or self-reliance as the state of not requiring any aid, support, interaction or trade with the outside world. It is generally believed that Self-reliance is a myth if it means a country depend on itself for all economic activities and thereby shut out the rest of the world”. webster (1831)

It is defined as a condition in which a nation makes free and voluntary choices in the disposition of its resources and output and in setting its economic and political priorities. This state of affairs is totally distinct from a situation where decisionmaking is constrained by a political or economic situation dictated by external compulsions. It should be very clear that self-reliance signified the capacity and capability of the country to face any crisis on the basis of internal strength. This is only possible if the economy can maintain equilibrium on the basis of commercial transactions including trade and capital movement. In short, it implies self-confidence and the capacity for autonomous goal-setting and decision-making,

rejecting all forms of dependence, invited or imposed. (Godfrey 2008)

### Importance of Self-Reliance in Islam

Self-reliance in Islam is an integral aspect of Islamic faith. The essence of self reliance could therefore be viewed in the following points: It leads to a great reward and hence attainment to everlasting blessings of Allah. The Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ يَدْخُلُ بِالسَّهْمِ الْوَاحِدِ ثَلَاثَةً نَفَرٍ الْجَنَّةَ صَانِعُهُ  
يَحْتَسِبُ فِصْنًا عَتِهِ الْخَيْرُ وَالرَّامِي بِهِ وَمُنْبَلُهُ

Indeed, Allah admits three people into Paradise because of one arrow: the one who makes it, seeking good in its making; the one who shoots it; and the one who hands it to the archer. (al-Tirmidhi, 1637)

- 1- It safeguard from begging and humiliation. The Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) says:

لَأَنْ يَأْخُذَ أَحَدُكُمْ أَحْبَلَهُ فَيَأْتِيَ الْجَبَلَ، فَيَجِيءُ بِحِزْمَةِ حَطَبٍ عَلَى ظَهْرِهِ، فَيَبِيعُهَا  
فَيَسْتَعِينُ بِثَمَنِهَا، خَيْرٌ لَهُ مِنْ أَنْ يَسْأَلَ النَّاسَ أَعْطَوْهُ أَوْ مَنَعُوهُ”

For one of you to take his rope, go to the mountain, bring back a bundle of firewood on his back, sell it, and hereby make himself self-sufficient with its price is better for him than asking people, whether they give him something or refuse him. (al-Bukhari, 1471)

In other sayings of the Prophet (may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him)

مَا يَزَالُ الرَّجُلُ يَسْأَلُ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَبِيتَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَيْسَ فِي  
وَجْهِهِ مَرْعَةٌ لَحْمٍ

“A man continues to ask people (for charity) until he comes on the Day of Resurrection with no piece of flesh on his face. (al-Bukhari, 1474)

- 3- It leads to attainment of everlasting joy in paradise after death. The Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) says:

مَنْ تَكْفَّلَ لِي أَنَا لَا يَسْأَلُ النَّاسَ شَيْءًا فَاتَّكَفَّلْتُ لَهُ بِجَنَّةٍ

Whoever guarantees for me that he will not ask people for anything, I will guarantee for him Paradise. (Abi Dawud, 1643)

### Reasons encourages Muslim to be Self-reliant in future:

In his teens, prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessing be upon him) accompanied his uncle on Syrian trading journeys to gain experience in commercial trade. Islamic history states that when Muhammad (may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him)

was either nine or twelve years while accompanying the *Makkaans'* caravan to Syria, he met a Christian monk or hermit named [Bahira](#) who is said to have foreseen Muhammad's career as a prophet of Allah. (Ahmad(1913).

In addition to that the below listed reasons are among the above history :

1. You can solve problems and make decisions by yourself.
2. This is critical as people grow older and learn to live independently
3. Allows you to feel happy by yourself, in yourself, and about yourself without needing to rely on others;

### ***The word “Youths”***

Youths generally period started from childhood and adulthood. The term youth is defined by oxford dictionary (7<sup>th</sup> edition) as the time of life when a person is young, especially before a child become an adult. The united states general assembly sees the youths as those people between the age of 5 and 24 years. Youth qualities are seriously needed in the past, Present and in the next coming future, for achieving noble object of the society. Every sector of the human endeavor must need the function of youths religiously socially politically and economically. Youth in Africa generally are about one point two billion people, while more than that living in the world, this estimation concluded that every one person in five is between age of fifteen 15 and 24 years a 18% of the world population are youth and children five to fourteen years comprises of about 14%. However, the total global population of the youths which is likely decrease or increase as decided by world analyst by 2.6 by the 2025. This estimation has no doubt gave birth to the critical thinking of some African countries in struggling to educate their young people and let them be self-reliant, while also anticipating substantial growth in the number of youths. These countries will be doubly challenged in their efforts to assure universal high-quality education which comprises moral education, productive employment and decent work for all especially if necessary, action of making them productive is not been taken. (P.F (2017)

According to Robert Kennedy: (2014)

“This world demands the quality of youths not a time of life but a state of mind, a temper of the will a quality of imagination a predominance of courage over timidity of advantage over the life of ease.”

### **Methodology**

The Research Design was conducted via mixed approach (qualitative and quantitative). The research investigated relevance of educational teachings in promoting self-reliance in sokoto caliphate among Muslim youth. Qualitative approach was used to provide a comprehensive understanding of how educational teaching in Sokoto Caliphate promotes self-reliance among Muslim youth. The approach of this study is divided into three chapters, the first two chapters employed a qualitative research design, while in chapter four quantitative approach will be used. Qualitative design was used to explain some concepts related to relevance of educational teachings in promoting self-reliance in sokoto caliphate among Muslim youth, which enables to gather in-depth insights on the topic. And the data were gathered from different sources include books, journals, unpublished Dissertations and Theses, conferences, paper presentations, and other documents that were acquired through web databases. While, quantitative approach was used to confirm theories related to

relevance of educational teachings in promoting self-reliance in sokoto caliphate among Muslim youth, which enables establishment of generalization of facts about the topic. And this required questionnaire for data collection and compilation. The population of this study was the whole Muslims youth in Sokoto Caliphate. This is needed in accepting generalization and conclusion of the study.

Sampling procedure for this study is purposive sampling procedure and non-probability sampling. This sampling procedure was used because, the current study is undertaken for exploratory purposes. The researcher selected a sample of 500 respondents from Sokoto state. The basis for the selection of these states was because of the higher number of Muslims youth as well as Islamic Scholars teaching in those states, which are the target of the study. Purposive sampling was used in order to get good prospects for accurate information about the relevance of educational teachings in promoting self-reliance in Sokoto caliphate among Muslim youth. The instruments used for the collection of data in this study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to some Muslims youth and some Scholars, which have relationship with either the teaching or learning in promoting self-reliance in Sokoto caliphate. According to Abu Abdussamad (2000:93) "... questionnaire should be used because of the economy it offers in terms of time and effort and its availability to demand for data in a uniform manner from all the respondents." The questionnaire was designed based on the objective of the study and it was written in English language. But research assistants was employed to assist and guide in the distribution, filling and retrieving of the questionnaires. The validity of the instruments used in this research, the questionnaire was drafted and copies was given to the supervisors and other specialists on matters of questionnaire for vetting and validation. While the reliability of the instrument, the researcher conducted a pilot testing to evaluate its reliability before conducting the main study. A small sample of respondents, representing the target population, was selected to fill in the questionnaire. The pilot testing phase allowed the researcher to identify any potential issues, ambiguities, or inconsistencies in the instrument and make necessary modifications. The results of the pilot testing indicated the reliability or otherwise of the instrument. The researcher used a structured questionnaire for the collection of data, and research assistants was used to help in the distributing and retrieving the questionnaires, in order to save time, money and energy of the researcher, since the distribution of all the questionnaires would be difficult for the researcher to carry it alone without getting assistance from other people. This is because of the time factor of the program and energy it may take. The researcher distributed 500 questionnaires, where 476 were retrieved. The researchers distributed 150 questionnaires in Sokoto North, but 142 were retrieved. 150 questionnaires were also distributed in Tambuwal, but 139 were retrieved. 100 questionnaires were distributed in Kware, but 98 were retrieved. In Sabon Birni, 100 questionnaires were distributed, but 97 were retrieved. The researcher used statistical tool for social science to compute simple percentage and frequencies to analyse the data collected. These tools were used to support the research analysis of the sources and to better fulfill the goals and objectives of the study.

## **Results**

### **Research question1**

Are the contemporary Muslim youth in Sokoto state Nigeria. aware of the educational teachings of the Sokoto Caliphate on Self-Reliance?

**Table 1: the contemporary Muslim youth in Sokoto state Nigeria aware of the educational teachings of the Sokoto Caliphate on Self-Reliance**

| Options                                                                                                               | Frequency  | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| I am familiar with the educational practices of the Sokoto Caliphate.                                                 | 52         | 10.9       |
| I have learned about the self-reliance values promoted by the Sokoto Caliphate in school or religious centers.        | 38         | 8          |
| Most Muslim youths in my area understand the teachings of the Sokoto Caliphate.                                       | 49         | 10.3       |
| The Sokoto Caliphate's focus on economic independence is discussed in our local Islamic institutions.                 | 47         | 9.9        |
| There is general awareness among youths about the link between Islamic education and self-reliance in the Sokoto era. | 269        | 56.5       |
| Programs and seminars in my area often reference the Sokoto Caliphate as a model for youth empowerment.               | 21         | 4.4        |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                          | <b>476</b> | <b>100</b> |

Table 7 presents the number and percentage of the respondents in which four hundred and seventy-six (476) questionnaires retrieved out of which 52 (10.9%) indicated that the respondents were familiar with the educational practices of the Sokoto Caliphate, while, 38 (8% ) of the respondents indicated that they have learned about the self-reliance values promoted by the Sokoto Caliphate in schools or religious centers. 49 (10.3%) of the respondents indicated that most Muslim youths in their areas understand the teachings of the Sokoto Caliphate, 47 (9.9%) of the respondents indicated that the Sokoto Caliphate's focuses on economic independence is discussed in their local Islamic institutions. 269 (56.5%) of the respondents indicated that there is general awareness among youths about the link between Islamic education and self-reliance in the Sokoto era, while 21 (4.4) of the respondents indicated that the Programs and seminars in their areas often reference the Sokoto Caliphate as a model for youth empowerment.

### Research question 2

What are the solutions to be derived from the educational teachings of the Sokoto Caliphate for the challenges and problems of unemployment among Muslim youth in Sokoto state, Nigeria?

*Table 2: Solutions to be derived from the educational teachings of the Sokoto Caliphate for the challenges and problems of unemployment among Muslim youth in Sokoto state, Nigeria*

|                                                                                                              |            |            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Adopting Sokoto Caliphate's vocational approach can reduce youth unemployment.                               | 55         | 11.6       |
| Sokoto Caliphate's values encourage entrepreneurship, which is a solution to unemployment.                   | 87         | 18.3       |
| Islamic-based skill acquisition models from the Caliphate should be reintroduced in schools.                 | 101        | 21.2       |
| Teaching self-reliance based on Islamic principles can empower jobless youth.                                | 83         | 17.4       |
| Sokoto Caliphate's emphasis on practical knowledge is a remedy to youth economic dependency.                 | 44         | 9.2        |
| Government and religious leaders should use Sokoto Caliphate teachings to design youth empowerment programs. | 106        | 22.3       |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                 | <b>476</b> | <b>100</b> |

Table 2 presents the number and percentage of the respondents in which four hundred and seventy-six (476) questionnaires retrieved out of which 55 (11.6%) indicated that the respondents adopting Sokoto Caliphate's vocational approach can reduce youth unemployment, while, 87 (18.3%) of the respondents indicated that Sokoto Caliphate's values encourage entrepreneurship, which is a solution to unemployment. 101 (21.2%) of the respondents indicated that Islamic-based skill acquisition models from the Caliphate should be reintroduced in schools, 83 (17.4%) of the respondents indicated that teaching self-reliance based on Islamic principles can empower jobless youth. 44 (9.2%) of the respondents indicated that the Sokoto Caliphate's emphasis on practical knowledge is a remedy to youth economic dependency, while 106 (22.3) of the respondents indicated that the government and religious leaders should use Sokoto Caliphate teachings to design youth empowerment programs.

### **Major Findings.**

1. The findings of the research indicate that majority of the respondents are aware of the link between Islamic education and self-reliance during the Sokoto Caliphate.
2. The research also found out that, adopting Sokoto Caliphate's vocational and entrepreneurial approaches could significantly reduce youth unemployment.

### ***Discussion of Major Findings***

These findings show a strong link between the educational ideas of the Sokoto Caliphate leaders and the empowerment of today's youth. The high level of awareness about these teachings indicates that past contributions to education and self-reliance continue to affect current discussions about learning.

1. The findings of the research also indicate that majority of the respondents are aware of the link between Islamic education and self-reliance during the Sokoto Caliphate. The findings reveal a moderate level of awareness among youth regarding Sokoto Caliphate's educational ethos, highlighting a gap in detailed knowledge and active dissemination. To achieve this, there should be need to educate the contemporary youth about these teachings, here is a need for increased awareness campaigns, curriculum integration, and community discussions to revive and preserve these historical values as a resource for youth empowerment.

2. The research also found out that, adopting Sokoto Caliphate's vocational and entrepreneurial approaches could significantly reduce youth unemployment. These results underscore the perceived practical benefits of integrating Sokoto Caliphate's vocational and entrepreneurial models into current youth development initiatives. The emphasis on skill acquisition, entrepreneurship, and practical knowledge aligns with the fourth research objective, indicating that traditional Islamic educational values could serve as effective solutions to youth unemployment. Policy-makers and educational authorities should consider these traditional approaches as complementary strategies for youth empowerment.

### **Conclusion**

The teachings of the Sokoto Caliphate provide a rich source of guidance for contemporary educational reform and youth empowerment strategies. The findings demonstrated that by integrating historical values focused on self-reliance, entrepreneurship, and community involvement into current educational frameworks, modern leaders and educators can help foster a resilient and self-sufficient generation. The interplay between historical context and present challenges underscores the importance of a comprehensive approach to youth empowerment that reflects the significance of cultural heritage in contemporary society.

### **Recommendations**

1. There is need to establish vocational centers rooted in Islamic and Sokoto Caliphate's educational models to equip youth with practical skills that promote self-employment and reduce dependency.
2. There is a pressing need for the government bodies and religious leaders to collaborate in designing and implementing youth empowerment programs inspired by Sokoto Caliphate teachings. By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can create a robust framework for youth empowerment that honors historical teachings while addressing the evolving needs of society .

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